



# News Release

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **State Health Officer Urges Health Care Providers to ‘Think Measles’**

SACRAMENTO – California Department of Public Health (CDPH) Director and State Health Officer Dr. Karen Smith is encouraging health care providers and others to consider measles in persons with rash and fever.

“Measles continues to circulate in much of the world outside of North and South America, but with Californians returning from trips abroad and tourists from other countries visiting California, we are reminding health care providers to keep measles in mind when they see patients with symptoms of the disease,” Dr. Smith said. “Although the measles outbreak associated with Disneyland was over in April, it is important at the start of the new academic year to consider measles in patients who present signs of fever and rash, especially if they have had international travel in the prior three weeks.”

CDPH urges health care providers to consider measles in patients of any age who have a fever and a rash. Measles begins with a fever that lasts for a couple of days accompanied by cough, runny nose, and red, watery eyes. The rash may appear three to seven days after symptoms begin. The rash typically appears first on the face, along the hairline, and behind the ears and then affects the rest of the body.

If measles is a possibility, CDPH urges health care providers to contact their local health departments immediately for assistance.

This recommendation comes on the heels of a measles diagnosis in a college student in Berkeley who had recently travelled internationally. To date, 125 measles cases with onset in 2015 have been reported throughout the state; most were associated with the Disneyland outbreak.

California counties that have reported measles cases in 2015 include: Alameda (5); Contra Costa (1); Long Beach (2); Los Angeles (28); Marin (2); Merced (1); Orange (33); Pasadena (3); Riverside (7); San Bernardino (11); San Diego (12); San Mateo (4); Santa Clara (3); Solano (1); Ventura (10); Yolo (1) and the City of Berkeley (1).

Immunization with the MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) vaccine protects against measles while abroad and back at home. Unvaccinated Californians who are traveling outside of North or South America should receive the MMR vaccine before they go. Infants who are traveling abroad can be vaccinated with an early dose as young as six months of age (though they should also have the two standard doses of the MMR at 12-15 months and at four to six years of age).

Check with your health care provider to see whether you and your family are fully protected against measles and other diseases that are common in other countries. Travelers can find helpful information about the vaccinations needed on the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) website](#).

Travelers should also watch for the symptoms of measles after returning home. If you think you or a family member may have measles, promptly contact your health care provider by telephone before entering a medical facility, where the disease could spread to others.

More information about measles is available on the [CDPH website](#).

[www.cdph.ca.gov](http://www.cdph.ca.gov)

